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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE. NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/PASCUAL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/26/2018  
TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PBTS](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [IS](#)  
SUBJECT: FOUR NEW CARAVANS AT TENE OMRIM SETTLEMENT

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: PolOff visited the settlement of Tene Omrim near Hebron on March 26 and confirmed March 26 press reports that four new caravans were installed for families evacuated from Gush Katif. The caravans expand the footprint some fifty feet. Peace Now Settlement Watch Director told PolOff that she believes settler leaders intentionally brought the caravans and Gush Katif evacuees to Tene Omrim, which is a secular and non-ideological, to make it harder for the GOI to negotiate its evacuation. (Note: Photos are available on the Consulate's classified website at <http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/jerusalem/ind ex.cfm> under the link for Political Reporting Attachments. End note.) END SUMMARY.

New Caravans:  
Fifty Feet Extension  
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12. (C) PolOff visited the Hebron area settlement of Tene Omrim on March 26 and met with settlement manager Uzi Pasa. Pasa showed PolOff four new caravans recently installed that are not yet inhabited but are reserved for Gush Katif evacuees. The new caravans are not yet hooked up to water and electricity. They sit on a cleared area with room for more caravans. Pasa said more would be installed in the near future. Pasa said the temporary caravans are consistent with the approved town plan for the Tene Omrim and would eventually be converted to permanent housing.

13. (C) The new caravans at Tene Omrim add another row of existing housing and expand the foot print of the settlement by approximately 50 feet.

Settlement Watch: Inviting Evacuees  
to fortify the hold of Secular Settlements  
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14. (C) Pasa is the settlement manager, but lives in the Israeli town of Ashdod. He describes himself as a "left-wing" supporter of peace. He said Tene Omrim's 150 families are mostly non-religious settlers who work in Beersheva or other nearby Israeli towns and are motivated by the settlement's cheaper housing prices. (Note: A new home in Tene Omrim is about 80,000 USD. End Note.) According to Pasa, Tene Omrim has approved plans for up to 300 homes and construction permits are only required from the Hebron area regional council.

15. (C) Peace Now Settlement Watch director Hagit Ofran told PolOff March 26 that regional council chairmen in the West Bank are intentionally inviting Gaza evacuees to live in secular settlements to fortify their ideological hold. She said that is the case at Tene Omrim, which Pasa said already

has 15 former Gush Katif families. By moving more religious and ideological settlers into secular settlements whose inhabitants might be willing to negotiate their removal, Ofra says settler leaders are attempting to hold on to certain areas.

WALLES